



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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Paul R. LePage

GOVERNOR

February 7, 2012

Dear Honorable Members of the 125th Legislature:

Maine is at a crossroads. Since 2002, Medicaid enrollment has grown by 78%, while our population has only grown by 7%. Because of this growth in enrollment, Medicaid spending has drastically increased by \$1 billion over the last decade, a 45% increase. Meanwhile, Maine people earn only 82% of the national average in wages, but are forced to pay for welfare benefits well above the national average. I ask all of you, where is the outrage? Maine's Medicaid program has grown at an unsustainable rate, and spending is out-of-control.

This problem needs to be fixed, and it must be fixed within the Department of Health & Human Services. Medicaid cannot continue to cannibalize state government, and sacrifice other agencies to pay for welfare. We need real structural change to fix this problem and make our welfare program affordable and sustainable. We cannot rely on one-time savings to solve the structural issues within Maine's welfare program.

Maine is 1 of only 7 states to provide free health coverage for adults with no dependent children. These adults are 60% male, and the vast majority are under the age of 44. In addition, 86% of these individuals are unmarried. Maine's welfare programs should offer a helping hand, and it is our responsibility to come together to make the tough decisions that will protect Maine's safety net.

We have been elected to do a job. The Maine people spoke in November 2010, and it is time we put politics aside and solve the problems that are preventing Maine from becoming a prosperous place to live. Maine's welfare system needs to be reformed, and tough decisions need to be made. Doing what is right for the Maine people is more important than getting reelected.

Without these structural changes, Maine will be in the same position next year, facing yet another structural shortfall within our welfare programs. The time to fix this problem is now. I ask you to stand with me and fight to reform welfare for the Maine people, and call for real structural reforms in the Department of Health & Human Services. Maine people deserve prosperity, and it should be our primary focus as we consider solving this budget shortfall.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor



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